

Message Text

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70

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AF-08 EA-07 EUR-12 SAB-01 SAM-01 SAL-01

OMB-01 DHA-02 /109 W

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P R 302110Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8626

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

USUN NEW YORK 0550

PANCANAL

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 5333

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, UN, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA AT NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT: POSITION ON KEY ISSUES

REF: A. STATE 178439; B. PANAMA 4496; C. PANAMA 5285

SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE PRESENTS EMBASSY ASSESSMENT OF POSITION PANAMA WILL TAKE ON ISSUES OTHER THAN HER OWN CANAL "CAUSE". TO BE BLUNT, THIS COUNTRY'S INTEREST IN THE MERITS OF MIDDLE EAST, KOREA, PUERTO RICO AND OTHER ISSUES IS MINOR. ON ALL OF THESE ITEMS PANAMA WILL GO ALONG WITH SUMMIT CONSENSSES TO ENSURE NON-ALIGNED SOLIDARITY ON ONLY ISSUE WHICH REALLY MATTERS TO HER. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY IS REPORTING IN SEPARATE MESSAGE PANAMA'S LIKELY POSITION ON HER CANAL ISSUE. THAT ISSUE IS MAGNETIC POLE OF HER PRESENCE AT NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT AND ITS PRESENTATION THE
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PURPOSE FOR HER CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT'S JOURNEY TO SRI

LANKA. ALL OTHER ISSUES, IN PANAMA'S VIEW, WAX OR WANE IN IMPORTANCE AS THEY IMPINGE ON HER ACHIEVEMENT OF SOLIDARITY FOR HER "CAUSE" IN COLOMBO. THIS IS VIVIDLY AND RECENTLY ILLUSTRATED BY FOREIGN MINISTER BOYD'S RECEPTION TO AN APPROACH BY THE CORE GROUP ON KOREA DESCRIBED SEPTTEL (NOTAL).

2. PANAMA, ON ALL OTHER ISSUES WILL CONFORM HER STANCE AT THE CONFERENCE TO WHATEVER EMERGES AS THE CONFERENCE CONSENSUS. SHE WILL NOT TRY TO TAKE THE LEAD IN FORMULATING NAM POSITIONS ON POLITICAL MATTERS SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST, KOREA, PUERTO RICO OR WHAT HAVE YOU, AND STILL LESS ON ECONOMIC MATTERS. NEITHER WILL SHE OPENLY OR PRIVATELY OPPOSE, MUCH LESS TRY TO BLOCK OR FORMALLY RESERVE, ON WHATEVER CONSENSUS MAY BE REACHED, EVEN IF SHE DOES NOT MUCH CARE FOR IT. ONLY IF HER PARTICIPATION, PRO OR CON, IN ANY MATTER WOULD BE TACTICALLY USEFUL IN THE GARNERING OF SUPPORT FOR HER OWN PROBLEM WILL SHE INTEREST HERSELF IN IT. THIS STANCE, IN OUR JUDGMENT, WILL OBTAIN NO MATTER WHAT COURSE SHE OPTS FOR ON HER OWN ISSUE.

3. ONLY ON THE MIDDLE EAST DO WE SEE THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME VARIATION FROM THIS GENERAL STRATEGY. DUE TO A VARIETY OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL FACTORS, THIS COUNTRY AND ITS LEADER WISH TO AVOID EXTREME CONDEMNATIONS OF ISRAEL. EVEN IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, MODERATION MAY BE WAIVED IF IT ALIENATES TO MANY.

4. THIS GOVERNMENT IS WELL AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO A REASONABLE HANDLING OF THE KOREA AND PUERTO RICO QUESTIONS AT SRI LANKA AND LATER AT THE UNGA. PANAMA HAS RECEIVED CORE GROUP DEMARCHES ON KOREA (REFTELS) AND WILL BE UNDER NO MISAPPREHENSION ON PUERTO RICO. SHE HAS NO REAL INTRINSIC INTEREST IN EITHER SITUATION; NEVERTHELESS, IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT SHE PUBLICLY DISASSOCIATE HERSELF FROM WHATEVER CONSENSUS--NO MATTER HOW FAR OUT--MAY EMERGE. SHE MAY, AFTER THE SUMMIT, NOT FEEL BOUND BY NAM CONSENSSES, BUT AT COLOMBO SHE WILL KEEP MUM ABOUT IT.
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5. THUS, WHILE IT DOES NOT HURT TO ENSURE THAT PANAMA IS AWARE OF OUR VIEWS ON THE OTHER KEY ISSUES AT THE SUMMIT, WE DO NOT SEE THAT IT WILL HELP MUCH THERE. THE TIME WHEN WE WILL NEED TO ACT ON SPECIFIC ISSUES WHICH CARRY OVER INTO THE GA, MOST NOTABLY ON KOREA, WILL BE AFTER SRI LANKA AND SHORTLY BEFORE THE GA IS TO ACT. WE WILL THEN NEED TO DIRECT OURSELVES TOWARD

DETACHING PANAMA FROM "COMMITMENT" TO SRI LANKA CON-
SENSUS TO WHICH HER BASIC INPUT WILL BE TACTICAL AND
NOTHING MORE.

JORDEN

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